

1726  
1.5  
Prodigium Willingbamense;  
OR,  
AUTHENTIC  
MEMOIRS

Of the more Remarkable Passages

IN THE

LIFE of a BOY,

Born at

Willingbam, near Cambridge,

October 31, 1741;

WHO,

Before he was Three Years old, was  
Three Feet, Eight Inches high,

And had the

MARKS of PUBERTY.

With some REFLECTIONS on his

UNDERSTANDING,  
STRENGTH,  
TEMPER,

MEMORY,  
GENIUS, and  
KNOWLEDGE.

By T. DAWKES, Surgeon.

*Mentiturque Virum, prodigiosus Infans.*

Mart. Novat.

L O N D O N.

Printed for C. DAVIS, over-against Gray's-Inn,  
Holborn. [Price One Shilling]

9

MEMOIRS  
OF THE  
LIFE OF A BOY  
1741

Joseph Banks

MARKS OF PROPERTY  
BY THE REVISION OF THE  
1741



TO  
**MARTIN FOLKES,**  
Esq; President;

TO THE  
PRESENT COUNCIL,

And the rest of the  
**FELLOWS of the Royal**  
**Society.**

Gentlemen,

**T**H E Substance of the  
 ensuing *little History*,  
having, at different Times,  
been offered to your Exa-  
mination, read at some  
of your *Meetings*, some  
Part of it, honoured with a

A Place

Place among your learned  
*Transactions*; and the *Ma-*  
*nuscript* of the *Whole*, been  
laid before you, at a Meet-  
ing of a great Number of  
you, the Nineteenth Day of  
*November* last, when I had  
the Honour of being perso-  
nally interrogated by you,  
about the Facts which re-  
commend it to your Belief:  
Both *Duty* and the deep *Re-*  
*gard* I have for your Dig-  
nity and Authority, con-  
strain me, to offer the Per-  
formance, *plain*, and *unpo-*  
*lish'd* as it is, to your *Pa-*  
*tronage* and *Protection*.

It

## *Dedication*

iii

It must be the *Subject*,  
Gentlemen, and not any Me-  
rit of the Writer, which must  
make this *Dedication* to  
you, even *pardonable*; and  
exempt *Me*, from the Im-  
putation of Impertinence,  
or Arrogance.

So *rare* and *curious* a  
Circumstance of *Natural*  
*History* should not, I pre-  
sume, be lost to Posterity.

Your Example of receiv-  
ing it, as what it is, an *un-*  
*deniable Truth*, without the  
least Shadow of *Fiction*, or  
*artful Device*, will, I doubt  
not, be followed by the



Learned of all Ages and  
Nations: To transmit it cre-  
ditable to whom was the  
grand View of,

Gentlemen,

*Your most Obedient,*

*most Obliged,*

*humble Servant,*

St. Ives, near Hunt.

Nov. 27, 1747.

THO. DAWKES.

# PREFACE.

**W**HILST all Things in the *Intellectual, Animal, and Vegetable* World, are found to act in the *regular* and *physical* Order, and by the *general Laws*, the Supreme Author of Life and Being, seems to have set himself, for the Propagation of them, from one Generation to another, our *Admiration* is not mov'd at all : But when we hear of any *extraordinary* or *preternatural* Pro-

## P R E F A C E.

duction, our *Curiosity* and *Wonder* are, of course, excited : For *Novelty* is the darling Passion of Mankind.

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*Prodigies*, in all Ages and Places, are to be met with, both in *Art* and *Nature*. It is not to my Purpose, to speak of the first Sort : But the Reader, perhaps, will indulge me a little, to recount some of those of the latter ; as it may be a Means of increasing his Belief of the Facts, of the ensuing Narrative.

Neither sacred, prophane, nor natural History, are silent about them. But I shall confine myself to the Mention of only two of them, which are, in a great measure, parallel to the Case which employs the ensuing Pages.



# PREFACE.

*Pliny*, the Historian, who lived in the Time of *Vespasian*, the Roman Emperor, gives us an Account of a Boy\*, who, at three Years of Age was three Cubits (or four Feet) and a half high, arrived to a State of Puberty, and at the Expiration of three Years, died of a sudden Contraction of his Limbs.

*Craterus*, the Brother of King *Antigonus*, tells us, that he knew one, who, in the Space of seven Years, was an Infant, a Youth, a mature Per-

\* Invenimus in Monumentis *Salaminae Euthymis* Filium, in tria Cubita, triennis, ad-  
levisse: incesu tardum, sensu hebetem, Puberem factum, voce robusta absumptum Contrac-  
tione membrorum, subita triennio circumactio.  
*Hist. Nat. Lib. vii.—xxvii.*

## P R E F A C E

*Person, an old Man, married a Wife, died, and left Issue \*.*

Of *Giants*, we have mention made in the sacred Writings, and the Story of *Sampson*, is known to our very Children.

*Fabricius Hildanus, Ambrose Parrey*, and others among the later Writers of *Natural History*, give us various Accounts of *monstrous Births* and preternatural Productions, which a great many of their Readers have been ready to censure, as being *fabulous*, and beneath their Credit : And

I

Κράτερος δὲ Φωσίου ὁ Ἀντιόχου τοῦ Βασιλέως  
ἀδελφός, γινώσκων τινὰ ἀνδρῶν· ὅτι ἐν ἑπτα ἔτε-  
σιν, παῖδα γενέσθαι κ, μετὰ κίον κ, ἀνδρά, κ, γέρον-  
τα κ, ὄνματα κ, παῖδο ποιησάμενον ἀποθανεῖν.

Phlegon de Mirab. cap. xxxii.

## PREFACE.

I have more than once heard *Pliny* condemned for some of the Facts of this kind, related by him. Nor can I spare to own, that if I had seen his Account of *his* Boy, or that of *Graterus*, already cited, before I saw the Subject of *my* History, I should have been ready to have doubted the Truth of either of them. But this modern Instance, so fresh in Mine, and the Memory of the Thousands who have seen this wonderful Boy, should teach us, not to be too rash in censuring an Author, who entertains us with the Relation of Matters of the marvellous kind.

I Disbelieve, I have not only given the Publick the Testimonies, and Affidavits, but also a meers Abstract, of the most remarkable Circumstances of this Boy's History, would, even now, obtain, in distant Places, but very little Credit, or



## P R E F A C E

or perhaps none at all: much less  
in another Century. But Persons  
who let Reason and mature Reflec-  
tion govern them, will find them-  
selves under a Necessity of giving  
Credit to an Account, so well at-  
tested, as the Reader will find the  
ensuing Narrative is.

For the Facts already alluded to;  
mentioned by *Pliny* and *Craterus*,  
we have only the bare Word of  
those two Authors; and yet I do not  
doubt their Veracity. But to render  
this of mine less liable to Confit or  
Disbelief, I have not only given the  
Publick, the Testimonials, and Affi-  
davits of such Circumstances as might  
seem to demand them; but have also,  
before two of his Majesty's Justices of  
the Peace, who have seen the Boy,  
and

## P R E F A C E.

and live in the Neighbourhood; voluntarily sworn to the Truth of such contained, in my History, as came within the Reach of my own Observation and Knowledge; several of which would have escaped the Cognizance of Persons, led by a meer Curiosity, of enquiring after the general Matter of their Astonishment.

As I found my Letter about the Child, to Dr. Mead in 1744. among the *Philosophical Transactions* for that Year; so I was satisfied, that my Account of him, had obtained due Credit with the Gentlemen, who compose the *Royal Society*. This led me to enquire into every Circumstance relating to him, which I thought might contribute to their farther Satisfaction, and induced me to make frequent Visits to the Boy, as Opportunity

## P R E F A C E

thinity would serve me; resolving, that that learned Body should not be imposed on, by any false or superficial Accounts, of a *Production* so rare, and so much the Object of their *Attention* and *Enquiry*. I had the greater Opportunity of doing this, because I was well acquainted with all the Persons who were capable of furnishing me with *dependent* Accounts; and because the Boy himself, took a seeming Complacency in me, from the very first: And, to the last, discovered some Regard to my *Authority*: For, conscious and vain of his Strength, he was indomitable as a *Panther*, to all but Mr. *Almond*, his Preceptor, and me, his Surgeon, who used to fright him, by brandishing a *dissecting Knife*, when he was unruly, or petulant, to his Father or Aunt.

and indeed me to make  
If



## P R E F A C E

If I may have been thought, by some, to have been too particular, or superficial in taking the Dimensions of the Boy, as some who saw, in the *Philosophical Transactions* the Account I sent to Dr. Mead, have told me, they think I have; I have this to say, on my Behalf, that I once thought so myself, till I came to make the Table, p. 32, &c. in which I have computed his different Degrees of Growth at different Periods; for the Reader will see that even the Tenths of an Inch, when carried to the Column of Inches, amount, in the Sum total, for near three Inches of his Height, which would have been lost in a Neglect of the Tenths.

in a Tract of this kind. That may, however, be assured, that nothing of ordinary consequence to an ordinary

*Truth,*

## P R E F A C E

*Truth*, and Representation of Matters of real Fact, being what I have had the greatest Regard to, in writing what I have here offered to the Publick, I shall be very easy, with regard to the *Diction*, if I have not rendered myself, by a Neglect of it, obnoxious to the Displeasure of these Gentlemen, whom I look upon to be the most interested in the Subject, which I have made my Choice.

I am not insensible, that, among the Number of my Readers, there will be some who may be unacquainted with the *Terms of Art*, and other Expressions, scarcely avoidable in a Tract of this kind. These may, however, be assured, that nothing of any Consequence to an ordinary Rea-

## P R E F A C E.

Reader, is by that Means designedly, concealed from them, there being Room enough for the meanest Capacity to pick out every thing relating to the History, which may satisfy his Curiosity, and compensate him for the Trouble he is at, in reading it.

The Subject itself, would lay me under a Necessity of having a Regard to *decent*, as well as *apt* Expressions : And in this Particular, I hope I have not laid myself liable to just and heavy Censure.

A U-



# PREFACE.

Reader, is by that Means designedly concealed from them, there being Room enough for the meanest Capacity to pick out every thing relating to the History, which may satisfy his Curiosity, and compensate him for the Trouble he is at, in reading it.

The Subject itself, would lay me under a Necessity of having a regard to several, as well as our Expeditions: And in this Particular, I hope I have not laid myself liable to just and necessary Censure.

A. U.

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AUTHENTIC  
MEMOIRS

Of the more Remarkable Passages  
IN THE  
LIFE of a BOY, &c.

**M**Argaret Thomas, afterwards  
Wife of Thomas Hall, and  
Mother of the strange Produc-  
tion of Nature, who is the  
Subject of the ensuing Pages; was born  
at *Swavesey*, a known Village within  
six Miles of *Cambridge*, April 18, 1710,  
and when she died was thirty-one  
Years old. She was Servant three Years  
to Mr. *Edmond Almond*, Pastor to a

B

Con-

Congregation of Dissenters, who meet  
at *Wivelingham*, in the County of *Cam-*  
*bridge*.

In the Year 1738, she quitted her Service, and married *Thomas Hall*, by whom in the Year 1741, she conceived this Boy, being her *second* Child, of whom she was delivered by Mrs. *Mary Bensted*, October 31, of the same Year.

When I first saw the Child (which was in *August*, 1744, and at the Instigation of Mrs. *Bensted*, from whom I had received several invitatory Messages, to indulge my Curiosity, by a View of this wonderful Production of Nature) I questioned the Midwife about his *Bulk*, when he was *just born*: she, with some of the Women present at the Labour, assur'd me, that at his *Birth*, they did not apprehend him to be any other than what they usually term a *lusty Boy*: But that when he was about nine Months old, and not before, they observed, that the *Parts of Generation* began to distinguish themselves, by an enormous Increase of them, and which

was



was still more surprizing, the *Lanugo* on the *Pubes*, itself, which is the Mark of *Puberty*, began to discover itself.

This particular *Phænomenon*, not only surprized, but gave the Father, Mother, and Relations, the utmost Uneasiness.

They kept the Affair secret as long as they could; only a few Women besides themselves, the Midwife and Nurse, having any Cognizance at all of it; till he was about two Years old, when it could no longer remain in *Privacy*.

When I went over to see him, it was with the utmost Reserve; for I could not credit the Accounts I had heard of him, though I had no Reason to doubt the *Veracity* of the Persons who had related the Affair to me; yet I could not help distrusting, whether some Particulars of their Story, might not be a little strained, and *hyperbolical*.

When I came to view the Subject of my Enquiry, I soon found, that what

had been told me, with Respect to his *Stature*, and *Bulk of Body*, was true.

Mr. *Almond* and Mrs. *Bensted* were with me at this Time, and we prevailed on the Father and Aunt, to let me take some *Dimensions* of him, which I did with Slips of Paper, each of which I distinguish'd by writing on them; and, at my Return Home, got Mr. *Davenport*, an Officer of Excise in the Neighbourhood, to measure them, and note down their various Lengths; and having got them reduced to a Table, I sent them, with the other Particulars, in a Letter to Dr. *Mead*, who thought proper to lay what he received, before the *Royal Society*, to whom it was read *January 10*, and afterwards printed in their *Transactions*, for *January, February, and March, 1745*, and is as follows:

*Learned*

*Learned Sir,*

Read Jan.

10, 1744-5.

‘ **A** *Prodigy of Nature*, hereunder  
 ‘ exactly described, has, for some  
 ‘ Months past, engaged the Attention of  
 ‘ the *Curious*, in this Neighbourhood,  
 ‘ and seems to demand that of that lear-  
 ‘ ned Body, of which you are a Mem-  
 ‘ ber of the *first Rank*; and, as such,  
 ‘ though a Stranger to you in Person,  
 ‘ I presume the following Account, will  
 ‘ not be altogether unacceptable to you.

‘ At the Instance of the Midwife,  
 ‘ concerned at the Time of Labour, I  
 ‘ went to a Village called *Willingham*,  
 ‘ alias *Wivelingham*, about six Miles  
 ‘ North of *Cambridge*, to see a Boy,  
 ‘ then (the latter End of *August*) just  
 ‘ *two Years and ten Months old*, of  
 ‘ whom I took, with the utmost Ac-  
 ‘ curacy, the following Dimensions.



	Feet	Inches	Tenths
His <i>Height</i> , which was —	3	8	5
The Measure round his <i>Neck</i>	1	1	2
— of the <i>Waist</i> —	1	11	2
From the <i>Head</i> of one <i>Hu-</i>	0	11	8
<i>merus</i> , to that of the other }			
From the <i>Head</i> of the <i>Hu-</i>	0	8	2
<i>merus</i> to the <i>Cubit</i> — }			
From the <i>Cubit</i> to the <i>Ex-</i>	0	6	0
<i>tr extremity</i> of the <i>Ulna</i> and }			
<i>Radius</i> — — — }			
The Measure round the <i>Wrist</i>	0	6	0
The Length of the <i>Thigh</i> ,	0	10	8
from the <i>Head</i> of the <i>Fe-</i>			
<i>mur</i> to the <i>Head</i> of the <i>Ti-</i>	0	10	8
<i>bia</i> — — — }			
The Measure round its <i>thick-</i>	1	2	3
<i>est Part</i> — — — }			
From the <i>Head</i> of the <i>Tibia</i>	0	9	1
to the <i>Astragalus</i> — — }			
The Length of the <i>Foot</i> —	0	6	0
The <i>Breadth</i> of the same —	0	3	3
The Measure of the <i>thickest</i>	0	10	3
Part of the <i>Calf</i> — — }			
The Length of the <i>Penis</i> as	0	3	3
<i>pendent</i> — — — }			
			Its

Its *Circumference* —

The *Testes*, measured round

to each *Side* of the *Pe-*

*nis* —

Height	Length	Width
0	2	7
0	2	2

‘ His *Weight* in his *Cloaths*, was *four*  
‘ *Stone* and *two Pounds*.

‘ The *Hair* of his *Head* is *long*,  
‘ *strong*, of a *dark Brown* Colour, and  
‘ displays itself *naturally*, in *fine Curls*.

‘ He has the distinguishing Mark of  
‘ *Puberty*, for the *Danugo*, upon the  
‘ *Pubes*, is as *long*, as *thick*, and as  
‘ *crisp*, as that of an *adult Person*.

‘ He is very *strong*. I saw him take  
‘ up and throw from him, with much  
‘ *Facility*, a *Black-smith's Hammer*,  
‘ which weighed *seventeen Pounds*;  
‘ and when he is provoked by other  
‘ *Children* (for he goes to *School*) he  
‘ does not fight with his *Fist* nor *Legs*,  
‘ but collars them, and lays them pro-  
‘ strate, by *meer Strength*. Thus, they

‘ tell me, he will frequently serve Boys  
‘ of *eight* or *ten* Years of Age.

‘ His *Voice* in common, is *extremely*  
‘ *manly*, as deep a *Bass*, as you can well  
‘ conceive, and he pronounces very di-  
‘ stinctly.

‘ He has something a little *savage* in  
‘ his Look, though they tell me, he is  
‘ not naturally, *quarrelsome*.

‘ He *eats* and *drinks* with great *Mo-*  
‘ *deration*.

‘ His Understanding seems to be, in  
‘ common, equal to that of a Child of  
‘ five or six Years old.

‘ He is *quick of Apprehension*, and  
‘ has a very *retentive Memory*.

‘ He has something of a *stately Walk*  
‘ with him, and seems conscious of that  
‘ uncommon Share of *Strength*, which  
‘ the Author of Nature has endowed  
‘ him with.

‘ He



‘ He is not made a *publick Shew* of,  
 ‘ but walks about, and plays, in common  
 ‘ with other Children.

‘ When I saw him, the *Glans* of the  
 ‘ *Penis* was quite uncovered; and his  
 ‘ *Aunt* and the *Midwife*, assured me  
 ‘ it was *always* so.

‘ His Father is a *little* Man, a La-  
 ‘ bourer, his Mother (who died when  
 ‘ he was but nine Months old, and, as  
 ‘ was supposed, by *giving him Suck*;  
 ‘ for, they tell me, she was found dead  
 ‘ with him at her Breast) was a Wo-  
 ‘ man of a *middle Stature*.

‘ The *Midwife* assured me, that  
 ‘ when he was first born, he was no  
 ‘ other than what they term a *lusty*  
 ‘ Boy, save that the *Parts of Genera-*  
 ‘ *tion* were *remarkably large*; and  
 ‘ that the *Lanugo* first appear’d, when  
 ‘ he was near a Year old, which gave  
 ‘ great Uneasiness to his Parents, who  
 ‘ were very religious People. I am,  
 learned Sir, *Your most obedient*

Huntingdon,  
 Jan. 4, 1744.

*humble Servant,*  
 Tho. Dawkes

But about three Months before the Receipt of this Letter of mine, Notice (and that the first) had, I found, been given to the Society of him, in a Letter to Mr. Philip Miller, one of the Fellows, from Mr. Almond, the Gentleman before mentioned, which was read at one of their Meetings, on the Eighth Day of November 1743; at which Time, was likewise read, another from one Mr. Baily, to James Theobalds, Esq; on the same Subject, and much to the same Purpose \*.

*The following is an Extract of Mr. Almond's Letter.*

*Willingham, Oct. 3, 1743.*

Read Nov.  
8, 1744.

S I R,

I Take the Freedom to give you an Account of a *Prodigy in Nature*, in the Town where I dwell, leaving it to your Discretion, whether it be worth

\* See *Philosophical Transact.* for the Months of January, February, and March, 1744-5, No. 475. p. 251.

‘ worth your while, to give the *Royal*  
 ‘ *Society* Information thereof.

‘ A Servant, who married out of my  
 ‘ Family, was delivered of her *second*  
 ‘ Child, a *Son*, who, at his Birth, had  
 ‘ something very extraordinary about  
 ‘ him, above other Infants, in particu-  
 ‘ lar, in *Partibus Generationis*; be-  
 ‘ sides, uncommonly large in his whole  
 ‘ Body.

‘ He grew to Admiration, for three  
 ‘ Quarters of a Year, having only the  
 ‘ *Breast-sustenance*; when his Mother  
 ‘ died *suddenly*, and, as is supposed, he  
 ‘ was accessory thereunto, by draw-  
 ‘ ing away her *vital Nourishment*.

‘ Since her Death, he has continued  
 ‘ growing in Proportion, and although  
 ‘ now but *two Years* and *eleven*  
 ‘ *Months* old, is *three Feet, nine Inches*  
 ‘ high, and better, and every Part in  
 ‘ Proportion thereunto.

‘ His *Strength* and *Courage* such, as  
 ‘ to overcome Boys of *six, seven, and*  
 ‘ *eight*



‘ eight Years of Age. His *Voice* like  
‘ a *Man’s*, very groom ; Weight above  
‘ *four Stone* \*.

‘ He appears to have as much Un-  
‘ derstanding, as a Boy of *five* or *six*  
‘ Years old.

‘ But what is most surprizing, his  
‘ *Penis* is *four Inches* long, when  
‘ erect ; the *Hair* on the *Pubes* an  
‘ *Inch* long, and *thick*. The Report of  
‘ him has brought People far and near  
‘ to see him.

‘ *Your obedient*

‘ *Humble Servant,*

‘ *Edmund Almond.*’

This Letter of Mr. *Almond’s*, seems  
to contradict one Circumstance in that  
of *mine* ; because, he says, ‘ that at his  
‘ *Birth*, he had something very *extra-*  
‘ *ordinary* about him above other In-  
‘ *fants* ;

• *Fourteen Pounds to the Stone.*

‘fants, in particular, in *Partibus Generationis* ; besides, *uncommonly* large  
‘in his *whole Body*.’

Mr. *Almond*, I presume, satisfied at that Time, with a bare Conviction of the Facts relating to his *Bulk*, and that still more extraordinary Circumstance, the *Size* of the *Organs of Generation*, and the *Mark of Virility* ; and glad at the same Time, from the common Propensity of Mankind, to Things *new*, or *uncommon*, to amuse his Friend, with the *History* of a *Production* so rare and *surprizing* ; might not so nicely enquire after the Time, when these Appearances first discover’d themselves ; it being sufficient to him, who does not professedly search into the *Works of Nature*, upon just and evident Grounds, to raise the Curiosity of a Friend, to whom he wrote a *familiar Letter*.

The Motives which induced *him* and *me*, to view the Object of our Attention, were quite different : A Curiosity *common* to *Mankind in general*, attracted *his* ; a *Thirst* after natural Knowledge, which

which either is, or should be, peculiar to Gentlemen of *our Profession*, excited me. His Enquiry into the *Phænomena* of Nature, naturally led me, to ask, what was remarkably observable at the *Birth* of the Child, whilst it might be indifferent to Mr. *Almond*, whether he searched so narrowly into that Particular, or not: Nor need it be wondered at, or made a Matter of *Censure*, that a Person, led by the meer Desire of being satisfied, whether what was reported to be *wonderful*, was *really* so or not; should be less accurate in his Observations, than one, who made a *strict Enquiry* into the most *minute* Particulars, his *sole*, and *secret* View.

But here I digress.

Dr. *Mortimer*, Secretary to the *Royal Society*, lets us know in the Transactions before-cited, that a *second* Letter was sent them by Mr. *Almond*, with a subjoin'd (Copy of) the *Affidavits* and *Testimonies* of the *Midwife*, *Minister*, *Churchwardens*, and Others, that



that this Child, *Thomas Hall*, was born on the Thirty-first Day of *October*, 1741. In which Letter, *Mr. Almond* also assur'd the Person, (*Mr. Miller*) to whom he wrote, that between *August the Twenty-third* and *November the Thirtieth* of the same Year, he was grown two Inches and a half, *from three Feet eight Inches and three Tenths, to three Feet eleven Inches.*

Soon after I had taken the above Dimensions, I had the Honour to dine with the Right Honourable the *Earl of Sandwich*, at the Crown at *Huntingdon*, to whom, together with *John Bigg of Gressham*, *Francis Naylaur of Offord, Esq.* two of his Majesty's *Justices of the Peace*, and some other Gentlemen, I communicated the Particulars of this young Giant, as the People called him.

My Report obtain'd but little Credit with them, when I mention'd the *Lamugo* on the *Rubes*; that Part of the Story seeming to them a little *strained* and

and *fabulous*. Nor, indeed, did I wonder at their *Incredulity*, when I reflected, how backward I my self was, to move, to satisfy my own Curiosity, after repeated Invitations from the *Midwife*, of whose Integrity I was nevertheless, fully satisfied. However, to convince them all, and especially the *Noble Personage* just mentioned, I undertook to produce the Boy, in Person, to his *Lordship*, and the other Gentlemen, who, with his Father and Aunt, at my Instigation, came to *Huntingdon* April 4, 1745.

His Lordship happened then to be at the Town, and had the Boy introduced to him, at the Inn where he was, with the *Mayor*, some of the *Aldermen*, and some other Gentlemen.

*His Lordship* finding the Facts which I had related to him to be true, and particularly *that* Part of my Story which respected the *Size* of the Boy, and his having the Marks of *Puberty*, required of his Father some *Credentials* about his  
Age,

((171))

*Age, from the Midwife, Nurse, and some other Persons present at his Birth. He produced the following:*

**I** Was assistant at the Labour of *Margaret Hall*, the Wife of *Thomas Hall*, and delivered her, of her Son, *Thomas Hall*, on the the Thirty-first Day of *October*, 1741.

Decemb.  
10, 1744.

*Mary Bensted*, Midwife.

**I** Baptized the above-said *Thomas Hall*, on the Second Day of *March*, 1741-2, and am thoroughly satisfied, that he was born, on the Thirty-first Day of *October*, 1741.

Decemb.  
10, 1744.

*Edmund Almond*, Minister.

WE



**W**E the Nurse, and Women, who attended, and were present, at the Birth of the abovemention'd *Thomas Hall*, Son of *Thomas Hall*, do know, and hereby testify, that he was born, *October the Thirty-first, 1741.*

Nurse, *Mary Sanders.*

Women present,

<i>Mary Corke,</i>	<i>Eliz. Few,</i>
<i>Mary Garner,</i>	<i>Hannah Buttrey,</i>
<i>Mary Taylor,</i>	<i>Jane Fisher,</i>
<i>Alice Rogers,</i>	<i>Mary Sindrey.</i>

**W**E the Church-wardens, Overseers, and principal Inhabitants of the Town of *Willingham*, do believe the above *Affidavits* to be true; and that *Thomas Hall*, the Son of *Thomas Hall*, was born the *Thirty-first of October 1741.*

<i>John Warman,</i>	}	Church-wardens.
<i>John White,</i>		
<i>Joseph Oaket,</i>	}	Overseers.
<i>John Read,</i>		

## INHABITANTS.

<i>Joseph Asplen,</i>	<i>William Bonfield,</i>
<i>John Bensted, jun.</i>	<i>John Osburn,</i>
<i>George Jordan,</i>	<i>William Ingle,</i>
<i>William Read,</i>	<i>William Berry,</i>
<i>Henry Ingle,</i>	<i>John Bensted, sen.</i>
<i>Martin Mayle,</i>	<i>Abraham Biggs.</i>

His *Lordship* having examined these Affidavits and Testimonies, required it of the Father, and Aunt of the Boy, to make Oath in his, and the Presence of the *Mayor*, Aldermen, and Gentlemen, then present, of the Truth of this Affair, which they readily did.

The *Affidavit* they then made, and which I now transcribe from the original Paper, runs thus:

C

B.

Borough of *Huntingdon*,  
24 April, 1745.

**T**HIS Day came *Thomas Hall*, Father of the above-named *Thomas Hall*, and *Elizabeth Hall*, his Aunt, and swore to the Truth of the above-written *Testimonials* before us,

**THOMAS MACKWORTH, Mayor,**

**SANDWICH,**

**WILLIAM FULLWOOD, M. D.**

<i>Thomas Thong,</i>	<i>John Deane,</i>
<i>Thomas Warner,</i>	<i>Charles Slow,</i>
<i>Walter Thong,</i>	<i>James Harris,</i>
<i>Reade Peacock,</i>	<i>Edward Ferrar.</i>

A few Days afterwards, (for I was out of Town when this was transacted) I happened again, into *Lord Sandwich's* Company, when his Lordship was pleased to express to me, the great Satisf-



tisfaction the View of the Boy, and the Credentials relating to the Facts of his *Birth* and *Age*, had given him; and, at the same Time, earnestly desir'd of me, that I would take every Opportunity of visiting him; but more particularly, he advis'd me to give an Account of him to *Martin Folkes, Esq;* the *President* of the *Royal Society*.

I told his *Lordship*, I had transmitted to Dr. *Mead*, a *Memoir* about him, which, I presumed, he would offer to the Consideration of the *Society*. But no Account of him having yet appear'd in the *Transactions*, and his *Lordship* doubting, whether that *Learned Body* would give Credit to a plain, and only *epistolary* Account of him; still press'd me to send the same Relation of the Affair, to the *President*, and gave me Direction how to write to him. I wav'd my Writing to that Gentleman for a few Days, and, at length, saw, in the next Number of the *Transactions*, the Letter I had sent to Dr. *Mead*, with another from Mr. *Almond* to Mr. *Miller*.

Finding that my Narrative had obtained Belief with the Society, I was animated with a Desire of indulging my Curiosity, as *far*, and as *long*, as the Subject of it would allow me; as it was a Matter which did, at that Time, engross so much of the Conversation of the Neighbourhood, for many Miles about; and which, I presumed, would have some Share in the Thoughts of the Curious, of *all* Nations, and in *all* Ages.

This induced me, in about a Month after, to pay this *wonderful Production of Nature*, another Visit, and taking Mr. *Almond* with me, I again measured his Height, and found he had increased in Stature, pretty nearly, *one Inch*.

I renewed my Visit for three Months, successively, about the Expiration of each Month; Mr. *Almond* each Time with me, when I found the *monthly* Addition to his Measure, as to this Particular, was, as nearly as possible, the same,

same, viz. one Inch per Month; but his *Wrist* (which I always survey'd at the same Time) varied not at all.

As I gave him Money, when I went to see him; so I found it no difficult Matter to ingratiate myself with him, and to cultivate a Friendship, which would give me all the Opportunities of easy Access to him, I could desire, and of making all the Observations, which I could pre-conceive, might be required.

I must crave the Liberty of a slight Digression here, to acquaint the Reader, that he had, before he came to *Huntingdon*, been made a publick Shew of at *Cambridge*, *St. Edmund's Bury*, and some other Places.

At *Cambridge*, Mr. *Almond* and Mrs. *Bensted*, the Midwife, swore to the Truth of the original *Affidavits* (mention'd in p. 17, 18) before Mr. *Nutting*, then (I think) *Mayer* of the Corporation, who subscribed their Depositions, in the following Form.



Town of *Cambridge*,

*Dec. 10, 1744.*

**T**HIS Day, *Edmund Almond*, and *Mary Bensted*, came before me, and swore to the Truth of the Affidavits above.

*Thomas Nutting.*

He was now carried from Place to Place, and exposed to *publick View*; so that I had no Opportunity of Inter-course with him, or making any Observations about him, till *May 1746*; when hearing he was returned, I rode over to the Town, and took with me *Mr. Moore*, an ingenious and professed Singing-master; in the Presence of whom, and *Mr. Fossey*, the Landlord of the House, at which our Horses stood, I carefully measured his Height, which I found to be *four Feet and one Inch*. His *Age* at that Time was, *four Years and six Months*.

I was a good deal surprized, to find such a *Discrimen* in his Growth; his Increase in Height, being no more than *five Inches*, in *thirteen Months*; whereas, in the Year 1744, I measured him, as I mentioned before, for *four Months* successively, and found that he had grown in Tallness, pretty nearly *one Inch* in *each Month*.

This *tardy Accretion*, I was not so much at a Loss to account for, after the Father had told us, that he had been ill for seven or eight Months, as he was at that Instant; the Surface of his Body, discovering a great Number, of *inflammatory* Pustles, and *furunculous* Eruptions, which had enervated him, vitiated his Blood, and depraved his Appetite.

I gave some Directions how, for the *future*, they should order his *Diet*, which being observed, they *all*, except *one large one*, disappear'd in a little Time, and he could eat and drink as usual.

usual. For it was too well known, that whilst he was made a *Spectacle* to the *wondering Multitude*, his Father (who indeed, could not controul, or govern him) had suffered him to participate of all the *luxurious* Meats and Drinks, which the astonished Spectators had tempted him to receive; in-somuch, that after his Return Home, he grew a kind of *Epicure*, and nothing would go down with him, as his Aunt assur'd me, but *White Meat*; for this was the Term he gave to *Fowls, Fish,* and other voluptuous Eatables, which he met with at the Houses of Gentlemen.

Besides, he was frequently *debauched* with *Wine*, and other *inebriating* Liquors, which the Unthinking among the Croud of *Wonderers*, would be apt to entertain him with.

While Mr. *Moore* was in the Room with me, he observed indeed, (before I had), that he had between the *Nose* and the *Upper-lip*, the Appearance of a Beard;



Beard ; this had then, but a feint Resemblance of one : But when I viewed him again in *November, 1746*, I found the Hair which grows on that Part, to display itself in *long and strong Whiskers*, of a dark-brown Colour.

He was quite smooth below the *Under-lip*, nor did so much as a *single Hair* appear on his *Chin*.

The Boy being, as I had heard, fond of *Singing*, I got Mr. *Moore* to try him, in what *Key*, we might suppose his *natural Voice* to be placed. By giving him Money, we got him to *fa, la*, the Gamut, several Times over. Mr. *Moore* set it in *B Mi*.

He took great Pains, afterwards, to find out the *Extremity* of his *Voice* ; but the Boy being ill, he was then *cross*, *peevish*, and *sullen* ; so that we could not be satisfied in that Particular.

About this Time, the *Earl of Sandwich* was in *Holland*, gone *Embassador*.

*dor to the States-General.* And as his *Excellency* had always been very inquisitive about the Boy, every Time he happened to meet with me; I sent him, while he was at *Utrecht*, the same Account I presented to the *Royal Society*, in *November*, 1746, with some other Particulars, mentioned in the foregoing Pages.

The Beginning of *November*, 1746,  
I received the following Letter :

*To Mr. Thomas Dawkes, Surgeon,  
at St. Ives, Huntingdonshire.*

S I R,

THE *Royal Society*, are greatly obliged to you, for your curious and particular Account of the *wonderful Boy*.

You are earnestly desired, to continue that Favour, with what is farther *remarkable* relating to him. I am, with great Esteem,

*Your most obedient, humble Servant,*

London, Nov.

3, 1746.

T. Lobb.

Mr. *Almond* had also one from the same Gentleman, to the same Purpose.

A few Days after the Receipt of this Letter, I made another Journey to *Willingham*, soon in the Morning, that I might have Time enough to take the most exact and particular Survey of his *bodily Parts*, as well as to inform myself of the *Passions of his Mind*, his *Genius*, and *Improvement in Knowledge*.

I found him at School, with Mr. *Almond*, and very alert, among the other Boys.

I was told, it was doubtful, whether the Boy would give me Leave to take the Dimensions of him again; being now grown (seemingly) sensible of my real Desigu in asking it of him. But knowing his Foible to be, an Ambition for *fine and gaudy Apparel*, I found Fault with the Cloaths he had then got on,



on, and told him, ' they were not good enough for so fine and *man-like* a Boy ' as he : that I intended him a new Suit, ' which should be made by *my* Taylor, ' if he would let me *measure* him.' To this he listened, with great Attention, and went with Chearfulness, into Mr. *Almond's* Parlour, to submit to the Con-  
 stivance.

Having thus far obtained, I proceed-  
 ed to measure him, for which Purpose  
 he chearfully stripped himself.

Having taken such a Survey of him,  
 as my Mind then dictated to me, I  
 measured all my Papers, and formed  
 the following Table, which, with other  
 remarkable Particulars, I sent to the  
*Royal Society*, in a Post or two.

*Dimensions*

*Dimensions of the Willingham-Boy, taken*

His *Stature*, which was in \_\_\_\_\_

The Measure round his *Neck* \_\_\_\_\_

From one *Head* of the *Humerus*, on *Shoulder*, or extreme Point of one *Clavicle*, or *Collar-bone* to the other \_\_\_\_\_

From the *Head* of the *Humerus*, to the *Olecranon*, or Point of the *Elbow* to \_\_\_\_\_

From the *Olecranon* to the Extremity of the *Ulna* and *Radius*, or Prominence of the Bone of the *Wrist* \_\_\_\_\_

*Dimensions of the Willingham-Boy, taken*

Aug. 1744.		Nov. 1746.		Difference.	
Ft.	In.	Ft.	In.	Ft.	In.
3	8	4	4	0	9
1	1	1	5	0	1
		1	2	0	4
0	4	1	0	0	4
0	8	0	11	0	2
0	6	0	8	0	5

*Dimensions of the Willingham-Boy, taken*

- Round the *Wrist* —
- From the Extremity of the *Radius*, or Prominence of the Bone of the *Wrist*, to that of the *Middle-Finger* —
- The *Length* of the *Thigh* from the Head of *Femur*, or *Thigh-Bone*, or rather from the *Acetabulum*, or flat Bone of the Hip to the Head of the *Tibia*, or biggest Bone of the Leg —

Aug. 1744.		Nov. 1746.		Difference.	
Ft.	In.	Ts.	Ft.	In.	Ts.
0	6	0	0	0	6
Not measured this Year.			0	0	0
0	10	7	1	0	9

Dimensions of the Willingham-Boy, taken

*Dimensions of the Willingham-Boy, taken*

Aug. 1744. Nov. 1746. Difference.



Dimensions of the Willingham-Boy, taken

From the Head of the Tibia,  
to the Astragalus, or Point of the  
Heel  
The Length of the Penis, as pen-  
dent \*  
The Testes, measured round to each  
Side of the Penis

Aug. 1744.				Nov. 1746.				Difference.	
Fe.	In.	Ts.	Ft.	Fe.	In.	Ts.	Fe.	In.	Ts.
0	9	1	1	0	6	6	0	3	5
0	3	3	0	0	9	9	0	1	6
0	5	2	0	0	7	4	0	2	2

D

The

His Penis, did not hang as other Children commonly do, flaccid and somewhat incurved; but seemed always, when I saw it, (which was very often) in some Degree, inflated, and made, with the Trunk of the Body, the Hypotenuse of a Right-angled Triangle of about 15 Degrees; nor did the Prepuce, naturally close itself over the Glans, as is usual, but retracted, as in a Penis phymosis, yet without any Sign of Inflammation.

*Dimensions of the Willingham-Boy, taken*

	Aug. 1744.		Nov. 1746.		Difference.	
	Ft.	In.   Ts.	Ft.	In.   Ts.	Ft.	In.   Ts.
The Length of a Lock of the <i>Lanugo</i> , clipped off, and extended on a Rule.		Not measured this Year.	0	2	0	0
The Measure round the <i>thickest</i> Part of the <i>Calf</i>	0	10   2	0	10	0	4
The <i>Circumference</i> of the <i>Penis</i>	0	2   7	0	3	0	7
The Measure round the <i>Body</i> , just above the <i>Spine</i> of the <i>Ilium</i> , or Edge of the flat Bone of the <i>Hip</i>		Not measured this Year.	2	3	0	0
The <i>Length</i> of the <i>Foot</i>	0	6   0	0	8	0	1
Its <i>Breadth</i> } in its { narrowest Part		Not measured this Year.	0	2	0	0
			0	3	0	0
The Measure round his <i>Body</i> , close to the <i>Axilla</i> , or Arm-pit, otherwise the <i>Waist</i>	2	3	2	3	0	0

Having taken these Dimensions of him, we put him into a Scale, and found that, in his Cloaths, he weighed *Eighty-five Pounds*, or *Six Stone* and *One Pound*. So that at the two Times of Mensuration, &c. his Weight stood thus;

1744	1746	Difference
lb. 58	lb. 85	lb. 27

In *January* 1746-7, I was in the Town with some Patients, and heard, that this Boy, was bad of a Fever; I call'd to see him, and found that he had one of the *Intermitting* Kind. I sent him a Medicine, and in two or three Days more, visited him again, but found he had not taken it. I re-proved him for his *Obstinacy*, and made him promise me, he would take it the next Day, as I had directed. But, when after two or three Days more, I saw him again, I found he

D 2



had not taken of it above once. It was a Solution of the *Sal Absyn-*  
*thi.*

Finding it was to no Purpose to attempt any longer, to give him Relief, by Medicines, I left him to the Care of his Aunt, and waved any more Visits to him, except accidental ones, till *June*; at the Beginning of which, I happened to meet with Dr. *Heberden*, of *St. John's-College, Cambridge*, who told me, he had been consulted for the *Willingham Boy*, and that he believed he had a *Phthisis Pulmonalis*, or Consumption, which he feared would shortly prove fatal to him.

In two or three Days after, I rode over to see him, and took with me the Reverend Mr. *Bowles*, Curate of the Parish.

When we enter'd the Room (which was about Noon) the Boy was going to rise, and when he came down, it shocked us both, to see what a  
strange

strange Alteration his Disease had made in him; so much was he *emaciated*!

We asked him several Questions, but he seemed averse to Speech, and regardless of either of us; nor was he more willing to *move* than to *answer*. We did, however, prevail on him to stand erect against the Wall, that I might take his Height, and suffered me to measure his *Wrist* also. But his infirm Condition, made it both *unreasonable*, and *unsafe*, to take any farther Dimensions of him.

At this Time, we found

	Ft.	In.	Ts.
His Height	4	6	2
His Wrist in Circumference	0	5	1

So that from November 1746, to June 1747, he had increased in Height, one Inch, but in the Measure of his Wrist, had decreased one half of an Inch.

We may observe here, that his Dis-temper, which had made such Havock with the *muscular Fibres*, and produced such an Alteration in the *Features* of his Face, had very little impeded the *Accretion* of the *Bones*; the Trunk of the whole Body, having, in eight Months, grown in Altitude, above an Inch; while the muscular Fibres were continually *wasting*.

When he would have come to his *expan*, or *extreme Degree of Growth*, is a Matter which only the *Supreme* and *Omniscient* Author of his Being, could be acquainted with. But some Sort of Conjecture, I presume, may be made from a Computation of the Difference of Growth, at different Periods. I shall therefore beg the Reader's Leave to amuse him with the best I can; submitting it to better Judgments, to censure or correct it.

Let



Let us then suppose, upon a moderate Computation, that, at the Time of his *Birth*, his *Length* was

It appears, that his *Perpendicular Accretion*, from *October 31, 1741, to August 3, 1744*, which is *Thirty-four Months*, and he then *two Years and ten Months old*, was —

From *August 3, 1744, to the Beginning of December* the same Year, his Age *3 Years and 2 Months*, he was found to grow

From *December, 1744, to November 1746*, which is *twenty-three Months*, he *four Years and ten Months old*, the *Accretion* was

Feet	Inches	Tenths
1	2	0
2	2	4
0	4	0
0	8	8

D 4

From

	Feet	Inches	Tenths
From November, 1746, to June, 1747, 8 Months, five Years and a half old	0	1	0
From June, 1747, to Au- gust, 27, 1747, 5 Years 10 Months old	0	0	0
	14	6	2

By this Table, we may plainly see, that his remarkable Increase in Altitude was, from the Time of his Birth, to December, 1744, or till he was three Years and two Months old. From which Time the *Auxesis* began to abate of its marvellous Fury ; For in the next twenty-three Months, he had not grown above *eight* Inches, or thereabouts, nor in the eight succeeding Months, more than *one* Inch.

Whe-

Whether he had grown any thing in the next two Months, which were the two last of his Life (for on *Wednesday*, the third of *September*, without any remarkable Symptoms or Agonies, he expired) we cannot say. But as he had increased but *one* Inch in the *eight* preceding Months, which is very little more than one Eighth *per* Month, if equally divided, (unless we suppose that his Distemper did entirely put a Stop to his Growth,) we may reasonably think that he was got to his *zenith*, two Months before he died, and that instead of being a *Giant*, he might have turn'd out a kind of *Dwarf*. For four Feet six Inches, and a trifle more, which was his utmost perpendicular Altitude two Months before he died; is but an insignificant Stature for a *Man*, who if with no better, should grow very *fat*, would give the Spectators of him, the natural Idea of a *Dwarf*. How strangely, how insensibly does Admiration infatuate us, and intoxicate our Reason!

for



for a little Attention to the Dictates of this, and a Comparison of the Degrees of his Growth, at two or three Periods at most, would have guided us, to have made a tolerable Presage, to what Degree of Stature this Subject of our Enquiry would probably have arrived; especially if, at the same Time, we considered the Circumstance of the early Appearance, of the *Marks of Puberty*.

Whether his Disease, under which he languished for eighteen Months, or better, was the *Causa sine qua non*, of the Tardiness of his Growth for some Months, and of its *dupon* two before he died; is a Point in *Physick*, which the Professors of that Science are best able to determine; though I hope the Affinity of *my* Profession to *theirs*, will atone for the Offence, if in a little Essay, I probably may publish, I should offer to the publick Censure and Correction, some Observations of my own upon *this* and *some other* Subjects, which have a more immediate Relation

to

to the *Case* of the Boy, and therefore do not so directly concern the Attention of the ordinary, and indifferent Reader, who will be better satisfied with the *History of Facts*, than with the Incumbrance of *speculative* Matters. But the candid Reader will, I hope, pardon this great Digression, which I was insensibly led into.

His *Voice* too, which, before his Illness, was, as I observed in my Letter to Dr. *Mead*, as deep a *Bass* as you can well conceive; and if I may be allowed (taking Truth, as well as several who have heard him, for Witness) to say it, if provok'd to cry, resembled, as nearly as possible, the Roaring, or if through *Lasciviousness*, the *Mugitus* of a *Bull*, was, to Admiration, alter'd; now, scarcely giving us the Idea of the ordinary one of a *Man*.

We questioned his Aunt, who is a sedate, and undesigning Woman, about his Apprehensions of *Death*. She intimated to us, that she had been very  
sol-

solicitous herself, to search out that, and that one Day she pressed him to eat, as she had very often, and used to have a *peevish* Answer from him; but being that Day in a better Humour than common, he answered, with great Composure of Mind, *Aunt, I know I should take it* (meaning the Food then prepared for him) *or else I know I must die; but I cannot eat.*

*August* the 28th, I went again to visit him, accompanied by Mr. *William Read*, a very creditable Inhabitant of the Town. He was then coming down Stairs, and was a still more piteous, and shocking Spectacle; for his Visage was *meagre*, having a dull, heavy, dejected Look, and hollow Eyes. His Legs, from the Knee to the Ankle, were pretty nearly *Cylinders*, his *Calves* being scarcely to be distinguished: He could not walk without Support, and when he did, it was not erect, but with an *Incurvation* of Body.

His



His Aunt shewed us his Head, in which were several Spaces (some as large as a Crown-piece) of *Baldness*.

She kemb'd his Hair in our Presence, and shew'd us, that it did not come off by that Means. She said, that since his Illness, she had observed an *insensible* Decay of it.

His *Visage*, in general, together with his *Gesture* and Way of *moving*, would have given any indifferent Spectator, unacquainted with his real Age, the lively Idea of a decrepid *old Man*, worn out with Age. But, remarking his *Chin*, in particular, (which now, and not many Days before) exhibited a *downy Beard*, it would rather resemble that of a *very old Woman*, unless, at the same time, you had a proper Regard to his *Whiskers* (the Appearance of which, I have before mentioned.)

We

We could not get him to answer us one Question ; but there being a good Fire in the Room, he drew his Chair, and, with his Elbows on his Knees, sat hovering over it.

He was *extremely cold*, and had a languid and quick Pulse, like that of a Person at the Point of Death.

We entreated him to shake Hands with us, which he did, and we took our Leave.

His Aunt informed us, that when she mentioned *Dying* to him, and going to *another World*; it seem'd to give him great Uneasiness; and he would always answer, *Don't let me hear of it.*

On *Wednesday*, the Third of *September*, 1747, about Six in the Morning, without any remarkable Symptoms, or Agonies, this *Wonder* of the Town and County wherein he was born,

born, at length expired, and his Remains, lie interr'd in the *Church-yard* at *Wivelingham*.

That very Morning I happened to be in Town, with a Patient, and hearing that the Boy was dead, went and viewed the breathless Corpse, which had the Aspect of a *venerable old Man*.

On the 15th, I waited on the Reverend Mr. Warham, of *Swavesy*, a Village about two Miles from *Wivelingham*, who performed the Ceremony of Marriage for *Thomas Hall*, and *Margaret* his Wife, and took out of the *Church-register*, the Date of their Marriage, which, I think it proper here to insert, to satisfy the Reader, that the Boy was no older than he is in this Narrative declared to be.

June



June 3, 1738.

Thomas Hall of Willingham, and  
Margaret Thomas, *his Wife,*  
*by Banns.*

I requested of the Father and the Aunt, that they would oblige the *Royal-Society* with the original Affidavits, and Testimonies, which relate to the Birth and Age of the Boy, which I readily obtained.

I was the more solicitous to get possessed of these, because I was apprehensive, that any Person, once Master of them, might impose on the Publick a *spurious*, or, at least, imperfect Account of an Affair of so much Importance to the Curious of succeeding Ages. For, Facts of this Nature, which induce Mankind to *Wonder*, cannot come too well attested, nor can the Historian be fairly liable

liable to Censure, if, for the Enforcement of the Belief of his Reader, he should descend to Particulars, which some may think superfluous, insignificant, and vain.

Having thus gone through the *Natural History* of this astonishing Object, of our Curiosity and Admiration, from the Day of his *first Existence*, to that of his *Cessation from Life*; in every particular Circumstance of which, I have had an inviolable Regard to *Truth*; the candid Reader, will not, I flatter myself, think I infringe upon his Time, if I indulge myself, with some short Reflections, on the *Faculties of his Mind*.

## UNDERSTANDING.

I Had observed before, in my Letter to Dr. Mead, that when he was *two Years and ten Months* old, he seemed to have the common Understanding of a Child of *five or six* Years of Age; nor did I perceive any gradual Increase of it, at all, as in other Children; for when I measured

E

him

him in *November*, 1746, he was *four Years and ten Months old*, and let me prevail on him to measure him, by the former Artifice, of pretending, my *Taylor* should make him a Suit of Cloaths; for had this kept Pace with the *remarkable Accretion* of his *Body*, he would easily have discover'd my Design, and have refus'd me the Experiment. But, I am ready to think, from his Behaviour in the Time of Sick-ness (and near the Approach of Death) which was Man-like, being quite *grave*, and free from *puerile* Impertinence, he might shoot up, at once, in this, as he did in *Stature, Bulk, and Virility*.

### M E M O R Y.

**A**S to his *Memory*, I am perfectly well satisfied, he had a very *retentive* one; but as Memory is most compleat, when it may be said to be *attentive* also, I shall leave the more curious and learned Reader to determine, from the two following Circumstances, whether the *latter* of the two Epithets, may be admitted here.

The



The very first Time I went to see him, he took a great deal of Notice of my *Whip*, which had nothing belonging to it singular, or remarkable. Almost *two Tears* afterwards, he was shown at a Publick-house, to several Gentlemen where I was present. He then asked me for my *Whip*. It lay on the Table, among three or four of the same Sort, and several others of a different kind. I told him where it lay, and bid him take it; at the same time, desired them to try him, whether he could single it out. They showed him several, which differed very little from it: He carefully examin'd each of those given to him, and declared, that neither of them was *mine*; but when he saw that which was *really* mine, he directly challenged it.

Another Time he was at *Huntingdon* to be exposed to publick View. I was at an Inn there, with some Gentlemen who had a Desire to see this *Willingham-wonder*, as they called him,

E 2      The

The Boy, who had been a Week in Town, was sent for to this Inn.

As soon as he, with his Father and Aunt, had entered the Room, he espied me, (for I sat directly opposite to the Door.) The Boy immediately challenged me by Name. There were in the Room, several Gentlemen of the military Order; among whom was one who, about three Weeks before, had been to *Willingham*, to gratify his Curiosity with the Sight of him, and had liberally rewarded the Father, for his Indulgence. This Gentleman, turning to the Boy, took him by the Hand, and asked him, *Thomas, Don't you know me?* Yes, said the Boy: *Who am I,* said the Captain? You are the *Rot-catcher*, reply'd the Boy. The Captain, surpriz'd at the Answer of the Boy, asked the Meaning of his calling him *Rat-catcher*. His Aunt, fearing he had moved the Indignation of the Captain, address'd herself to him, Sir, he does not say you are the *Rat-catcher*, he says, you are *not* he: But I say, he is the *Rot-catcher*, returns the Boy.

A

A Gentleman who was in the Room, asked the Boy, *Thomas*, how many *Soldiers* are there in the Room? *Never-a-one*, said *Thomas*. No, says the Gentleman, and pointing to the *Captain*, just mentioned, is not that Gentleman a Soldier? No, reply'd *Thomas*, he is the *Rot-catcher*.

Now, the Market-day before, he had been particularly caressed, by a *Rat-catcher* of the Neighbourhood, who commonly appears, in a *Waistcoat*, on the Borders of which, are the Figures of Rats, wrought with *Silver-thread*, which was the Dress in which he was at that Time; and he a little resembled the *Captain*, in *Bulk* and *Stature*, but not in *Features*, nor *Complexion*; the one being *black*, the other *fair* and *ruddy*. Both, indeed, had *Waistcoats* with Ornaments of *Silver*, but one had *Lace* round the Borders, the other the Figures of Rats.



## STRENGTH.

I HAVE already observed, in my Letter to Dr. *Mead*, with respect to his *Strength*; that I saw him, before he was three Years old, take a *Smith's Hammer*, which weighed *seventeen Pounds*, and throw it from him with Ease.

I was, a little Time after, (I think about two Months) in Company with some of the most creditable Inhabitants of the Place; who told me, he had, a little before, taken up from the Ground, a large *Cheshire-cheese*, and set it on his Head; and that a *Runlet*, holding *two Gallons*, *Winchester-measure*, which was filled with Ale, standing in a Room where he was, he took it up to his Mouth, and drank of it freely.

About this Time, he began to be fond of shewing his *Strength*, and being in *Coats*, as yet, he made an awkward and  
un-

unusual Figure ; which made him the Jest of the Children at School ; though the Weight of his Hand, made it sometimes, cost them dear. Thus his *ridiculous Habit*, made him the Object of their *Sport* and *Pastime*, whilst the Idea of his *Valour*, rendered him that, of their *Terror*, and continual *Dread* : For this he was, in so remarkable a Manner, and to so great a Degree ; that the Mistresses of *two* Schools, at which he had been, were, as one of them assur'd me, obliged to desire of his Father, that he would not send him any more. For their little Insults, and Mockeries, were as intolerable to him, as those of the Children of old were to *Elijah*, who call'd him *Bald-head*. So conscious was he of his superior *Strength*, and imagined Manhood !

His Way to make himself terrible to other Children, was, (as Mr. *Bensted*, to whose Mother he some Time, went to School) assur'd me, to threaten to fight them, *two at a Time*, and put them into his *Pocket*.

In *November*, 1746, (he being then just five Years old) when I measured him the second Time, for the Satisfaction of the *Royal Society*; a Lad of pretty Sense, who was a Boarder in the Family of Mr. *Almond*, to whom *Thomas* also, then went to School, told me after I had taken the Dimensions of him; that if I had a Mind to try his Strength, he could inform me, how it might easily be done. I was pleased with the Suggestion, and desired the young Gentleman, that he would name the Experiment. He answered me, 'My Master has got a large, new *Wheel-barrow*, which came home Yesterday, and we have each of us been trying, who could *trundle* it with the heaviest Weight in it. *Thomas* (meaning our gigantic Boy) is very fond of shewing, that he can beat any of us at it.'

This *Wheel-barrow*, (which is for the Uses of the Garden) is, indeed, one of an uncommon Size, and very heavy, as it was then new, and made of green, and ponderous, Wood. I



I got several of the Lads, who were about ten, and twelve Years of Age, to engage in the Enterprize, and, alternately, to trundle one another in it. *Thomas*, was as eager as any of them, to take his Turn. I desired one of the biggest of them, to get into the Barrow; whom he trundled, with all imaginable Ease. I then desired another of them, of much the same Age, and Size, to get in to the other. This done, I bad *Thomas* trundle them both: He raised up the Body of the Barrow, with seeming Ease, and tried to wheel it forward, but could not make it move, above two Rotations of the Wheel. The weight of the two Lads, when put into the Scale, was *twelve Stone, two Pounds*. Thus, I imagine, we found out his *utmost Strength*. Of this Circumstance, I gave an Account to the *Royal Society*, when I sent them the Dimensions taken in *Nov. 1746*.

G E.

## G E N I U S.

**O**F his *Genius*, Mr. *Almond*, who was his *Preceptor*, and must be far the best Judge, has given a very particular Account to the *Royal Society*; which, I presume, will be printed in some Number of their Transactions: However, as I am not quite a Stranger, even to *this* Part of his Composition, I shall give the Reader, my own Sentiments about it, in as good a Manner as *Truth*, my own *Observation*, and *Ability* will permit me.

He seemed, rather to incline to *Mechanic*, than to any other kind of Learning; except it was that of *Music*, for which he shewed, he had some sort of Ear; appearing, at all Times, greatly delighted, when there was any performed where he was.

Which

Which of the mechanic Arts, he would particularly have inclined to, I cannot pretend to say ; but *Sculptures*, or *Paintings* of any kind, gave him sensible Delight : And, if he could get a Pencil, he would assay, to draw the Out-lines, of some Object or other.

One Day in particular, observing my Pencil in my Hand, he took it from me, and drew upon a Piece of Paper, a Figure, which he called a *Horse* : He returned the Pencil to me, and bad me make one. I drew him one, as well as I thought the Occasion required, upon a little Bit of the Paper : With this he found Fault, and said, he would have a *great huge* one. I accordingly, drew him one, as large as the Sheet of Paper would admit of. This pleased him, finding that the Figure so drawn, had taken up, in a great measure, the whole Surface of the Paper. He then took it, and, surveying it, with his Finger, pointed out, very readily, and distinctly, the several more obvious Parts of it, as this

is



is his *Ear*, this his *Nose*, this his *Eye*, &c. He was, at this Time, about *four* Years old.

This Interview, afforded me *two*, very pleasing Reflections: One was, that it induced me to think, that either *Painting, Sculpture, Carving*, or some kindred *Mechanic* Art, would be the Object of his peculiar Choice, if he should survive, till *Discretion* took its Turn in the Government of him:

The other, that he had the Idea of *Magnificence*; for this, his requiring of me the Figure of a *great huge* Horse, seem'd to me, to intimate. On this Consideration, I imagined, that if his *Genius* should, by the Smiles of Fortune, be indulged, the Employment of a *Statuary*, would please him best.

T E M

## TEMPER and DISPOSITION.

**W**E are next to consider his natural *Temper, and Disposition.*

By all the Observation I could ever make, or all the Intelligence I could get, from the most impartial, or discreetest Persons, I was acquainted with in the Neighbourhood, I could never learn, that he was *naturally quarrelsome, or litigious*; but from both, I found, that he was *morose, obstinate, and impatient of Affront*; and would remember an Injury done him, and maintain his Resentment, to the very last.

Mr. *Almond* told me an Instance of his long Resentment. *Tom* being at an House, when a certain Boy, who had some Months before, affronted him, passed by, observing him; brandished his Fist, and said, *I'll have him in my Pocket, that I will.*

If

If the *Girls* provoked him, (as they often would) his Way of avenging himself of them was, to run after them, with his *Penis* in his Hand ; and if he overtook them, to *piss* on them. This a Person of the Town, who said he had been often an Eye-witness of the Fact, assured me was his Custom.

How far his Inclination might lead him to *Venery*, and the Pursuit of the Pleasures, arising from Copulation, I cannot assure the Reader, from any Observation I could make : But, I think, that as the Organs of Generation, were so remarkably large in him, as the Marks of *Puberty*, appeared so very soon, and as he was endowed with so large a Share of Strength ; we may venture, *physically*, to conclude ; that an Increase in Understanding, barely equal to common Discretion, added to that of his Stature, would naturally have led him to Pursuits of that kind ; for his *Disposition* was *amorous*, and he had a lascivious Eye, and both his Father and



and Aunt assured me, that he took great Notice of the Features of female Objects, and would single out of a Number, the most agreeable of them. Nor is there, I think, any Room to doubt, whether he could perform the Act of Generation; for an *Officer* in the *Welsh Fusileers*, assured me, that he was present, when another Gentleman, while he was at *Huntingdon*, did, by a certain Artifice, procure so strong an Erection, as threw the Boy into such an Ecstasy; that had not the *Father* intervened, they all believed he would have emitted. The same Account I also had, from three more Officers of *Wade's Regiment*, who made Use of the same Artifice, at the same Place.

As for the *Boys*, he rarely *struck* them, as I observed in another Place, but *collaring* them, laid them prostrate by meer Strength.

Upon a Review of the Whole, it follows (as all Circumstances con-

# IMPROVEMENT in KNOWLEDGE.

**A**FTER he returned from being made a *publick Spectacle*, his Father put him to Mr. *Almond*, to improve him in the Knowledge of his *Mother Tongue*; in which he did not turn out the *dullest* of his Scholars; for before he had been with him a Year, he was able to read a Chapter in the *Testament* tolerably well, with a little *Hesitation* indeed; but yet without *Spelling*; for this he seemed to think a *Disgrace* to him.

He shewed great Inclination to learn to *write*, and, I am ready to think, would soon have made some Figure in that useful Art, had not *Heaven* forbid it, by visiting him with an Illness, which terminated at length, in his Death.

Upon a Review of the Whole, if we allow, (as all Circumstances considered,

dered; I think we reasonably may) each *Month* to be a *Year* of this *Boy's* Life, he may be said, to have pass'd through each of the Stages of *Life*, called *Childhood*, *Youth*, *Manhood*, and *old Age*, in *seventy Months*, which *Men* generally do in so many *Years*.

I cannot help taking Notice here, that *Seneca*, in his Consolatory Epistle to *Marcia*, the Daughter of *Cremutius*, who had shed Floods of Tears for her Son, whom the Largesses of Nature rendered, the Desire of her, as well as of other People; observes, that *extraordinary Productions* of Nature, are seldom long-liv'd, and from the Principles of the best Philosophy, in Vogue in his Time, endeavours to account for it, why it should be so. \*

F

I

\* Quicquid ad summum pervenit, ad Exitum propè est. Eripit se, aufertque ex Oculis, perfecta Virtus: nec ultimum Tempus expectant, quæ in primo maturuerunt. Ignis, quo clarior fuit, citius extinguitur: Provaci-  
or est, qui, cum lentâ difficilique materiâ commissus fumo-  
que demersus, ex Sordido lucet; eadem enim detinet Causa,  
quæ maligne alit. Sic Ingenia, quo illustriora, breviora sunt. Nam ubi Incremento locus non est, vicinus

Occ.



I know not how I can better conclude this Narrative of this Boy, than with the Words of *Seneca*, in another Part of the same Epistle ;

*Tulit suam, Metasque dati prevenit ad Ævi.*

*Consolat. ad Marciam, cap. xx.*

*Hunt.* } **T** *Thomas Dawkes*, Surge-  
to wit. } on, hath made Oath be-  
fore Us, that such of the Facts  
as he hath mentioned in the foregoing  
Narrative, to have come within the  
Verge of his own Knowledge, are, in  
every Particular, true.

*Lon-* { *Nov. 21,*  
*don,* { *1747.*

*E. Lawrence,*  
*John Cole.*

*Occasus est: Fabianus ait, quod nostri quoque parentes vidēre, Puerum Romæ fuisse Staturâ ingentis Viri: Sed hic cito discessit, & moriturum brevi, nemo non prudens dixit. Non poterit enim ad illam Ætatem pervenire quam præceperat. Ita est judicium imminentis Exitû maturitas & appetit Finis, ubi incrementa consumpta sunt.*

*Consolat. ad Marciam, cap. xxiii.*

F I N I S.



*SOME of the Inhabitants of the Place, unwilling that so rare an Instance of Creating Wisdom, should be lost to future Ages, having expressed to me their Inclination to contribute a Stone to the Remembrance of this rare and curious Piece of Natural History, I have humbly presumed to furnish the same, if they shall desire it, with the following Inscription; which may, possibly, give the Reader, if a Stranger, an Idea of the Real History of what was most remarkable in the Life of this our Prodigy.*

E P I T A P H.

*Siste Viator !*

Noverisque mirans,

*Reliquias* T H O M Æ

A Thomæ & Margaritæ H A L L

Hic jacere sepultas :

Qui

*Nondum Anniculus,*

RUBUIT :

*Triennis necdum,*

In Quatuor fere Pedes,

ADOLEVERAT :

*Ingenti Robore,*

Partium Symmetriâ rectâ

*Stupendâ Voce*

PRÆDITUS

*Sexennis neque,*

*profectâ quasi Ætate,*

MORTUUS EST.

*Accepit in Hâc Villâ Vitam*

XXXI<sup>mo</sup> Kalend. OCTOBR. MDCCXLI.

*Inque eadem, reddidit illam*

SEPTEMBRIS III<sup>tio</sup>

MDCCXLVII.



*The English Reader may take it thus :*

Stop Traveller,

And *wondering*, know,

Here buried lie the *Remains* of

T H O M A S,

The Son of *Thomas*, and *Margaret*

H A L L,

Who,

Not *One* Year old,

Had the Signs of M A N H O O D :

Not *Three*,

Was almost *Four* Feet high:

Endued with UNCOMMON STRENGTH,

A just PROPORTION of *Parts*,

And a STUPENDOUS VOICE :

Before *Six*,

Died,

As if were, of an ADVANCED AGE.

He was born in this Village Oct. xxxi<sup>th</sup>,

MDCCXLI, and in the same,

Departed this Life, Sept. iii<sup>d</sup>,

MDCCXLVII.

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